

ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT 2013



COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a snapshot of the state's urban, rural, public and special transportation system's that make up the Community Transportation network. The report provides insight into the current status, performance levels and potential for progress by showcasing various operational data, output trends and projected economic impacts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Transportation plays an important role in supporting economic growth and other measures/factors that improve the quality of life for our citizens. Coordination of services in community transportation benefits every segment of society; including individuals, families, businesses and industries. Community Transportation in Mississippi is necessary to support the overall economic growth and activity in our local, state and national economies. Major benefits of this coordinated effort include; increased access to employment and education, reduced traffic congestion and pollution, improved air quality, increased mobility for medical services and an improved quality of life. To better understand the perspective of this annual report, we offer some observations from a recent American Public Transportation Association (APTA) study. The APTA lists economic, productivity, mobility and efficiency benefits associated with transit investments. Overall, for every *\$1 invested in transportation a State has the potential to generate \$3 in benefits*. Community Transportation is a good investment because it generates many benefits for the community it serves. Some examples of these benefits are:

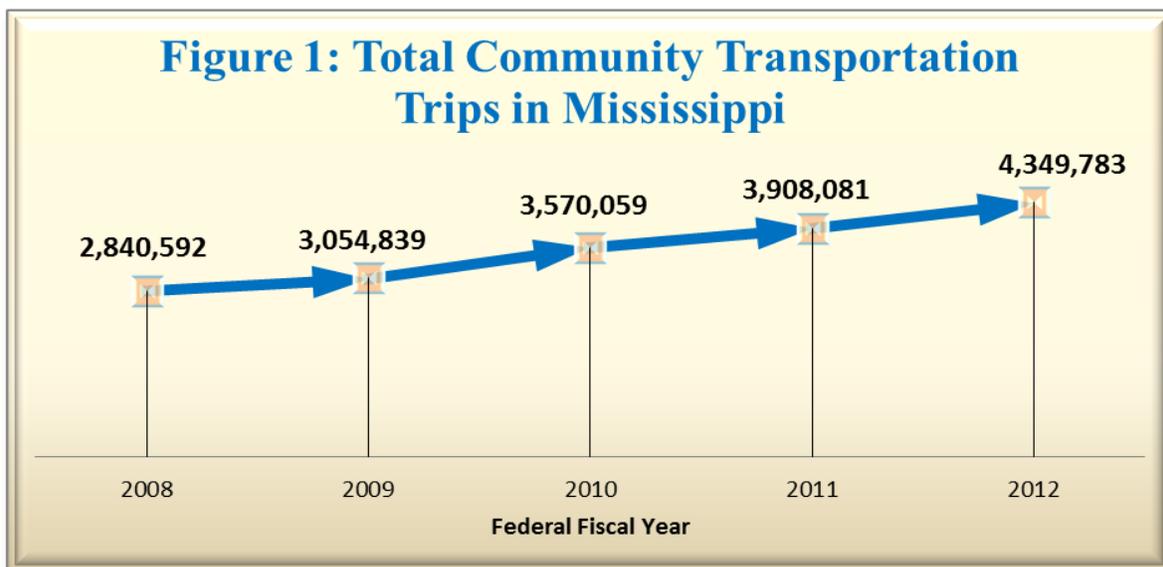
- Riders have better access to job training and jobs: employment increases, workers get better jobs, labor market expands. This creates a positive return on investment for that community;
- Riders get better access to healthcare, subsidized services and shopping; riders become (and stay) more independent;
- Riders save on their travel costs when using transit;
- Local businesses increase their level of activity; more money is spent locally, thereby potentially creating an attractive community for businesses and visitors.

As the lead agency for addressing mobility solutions, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) recognizes the importance of community transportation services as a practical mobility option throughout the State. Through the Public Transit Division, MDOT aims to plan, develop, implement and administer sustainable transportation programs, projects and plans that promote the most effective and efficient allocation of federal, state, and local resources throughout the state. These programs include service delivery, technical assistance, and training components. The Division administers U. S. Department of Transportation funds on behalf of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for rural and small urban areas of the state. These programs include: Section 5311 Rural General Public Transportation Program, Section 5311 (f) Intercity Bus Program, Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), Section 5310 Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation Program and Section 5317 New Freedom Program. Through mobility management, coordination efforts are provided among these programs in addition to other transit stakeholders and in an innovative customer driven approach, these programs are coordinated to achieve more efficient and effective delivery of transportation services throughout Mississippi.

TRENDS

Many positive success stories and trends have resulted from the practical coordination of transportation over the past five years included in this report (i.e. 2008-2012). Approximately 60 organizations, funded through MDOT, are currently providing some form of transit services covering 75 percent of Mississippi's geographic area. These transit organizations assist the general public, low-income, elderly citizens, citizens with disabilities and students gain access to needed: employment, medical, education, nutrition, social and recreational services; particularly in rural areas of Mississippi. The demand for community transportation services has steadily increased throughout the state. This demand is clearly illustrated in the steady increase in passenger trips over the last five years and has been successful through the coordination of services between public and private agencies across Mississippi.

Demand for community transit has grown in recent years, despite the effects of the recession. A total of 17,723,354 trips were provided by community transportation projects from 2008-2012. The total number of trips provided steadily increased from 2,840,592 in 2008 to 4,349,783 in 2012 (see Figure 1). This positive trend represents 1,493,971 more passenger trips or a 53% increase. These passenger trips are classified based on employment, medical, quality of life, education/training, and other destinations (see Attachment A). The Section 5311 Rural Transportation Program recorded a 75% increase in trips over the five year period. Increases occurred in each trip category exclusive of 'other'; employment trips increased by 100%, medical trips 35%, education/training 200% and quality of life 80% over the five year period. Similarly, the Section 5310 program recorded increased ridership and passenger trips of 38%. With over 80% of the program trips attributed to elderly and disabled passengers; notable transportation demands have increased for education/training and employment purposes. The urban systems; located in the cities of Jackson, Hattiesburg and Gulfport have also observed a sparked increase in the demand for transportation services from fiscal years 2008-2012. The total number of passenger trips for the three urban systems increased by 42% from 1,319,831 to 1,878,661 trips over the five year period.



ECONOMIC IMPACT

A study conducted by the University of Florida revealed the substantial return on investment potential associated with community transportation which is cited below. Their investigation revealed that while it is generally acknowledged that public dollars invested in transportation programs do not directly “generate” revenues or returns in the traditional sense, there are still significant financial benefits that add to the community from its investment. Explicitly, these community transportation programs benefit the community based on the economic activity that is generated as a result of five common types of rural community transportation programs: 1) Employment Trips, 2) Education/Training Trips 3) Medical Trips, and 4) Quality of Life Trips. These programs provide both direct and indirect economic benefits.

- **Employment** – The purpose of employment trips is to provide transportation to jobs for individuals who may not have access to conventional means of transportation and also to provide individuals with a cost saving and convenient mode of transportation. Employment trips through the Section 5310, 5311 & 5316 programs steadily increased by 118% from 240,848 trips in 2008 to 524,257 in 2012 (see Figure2).

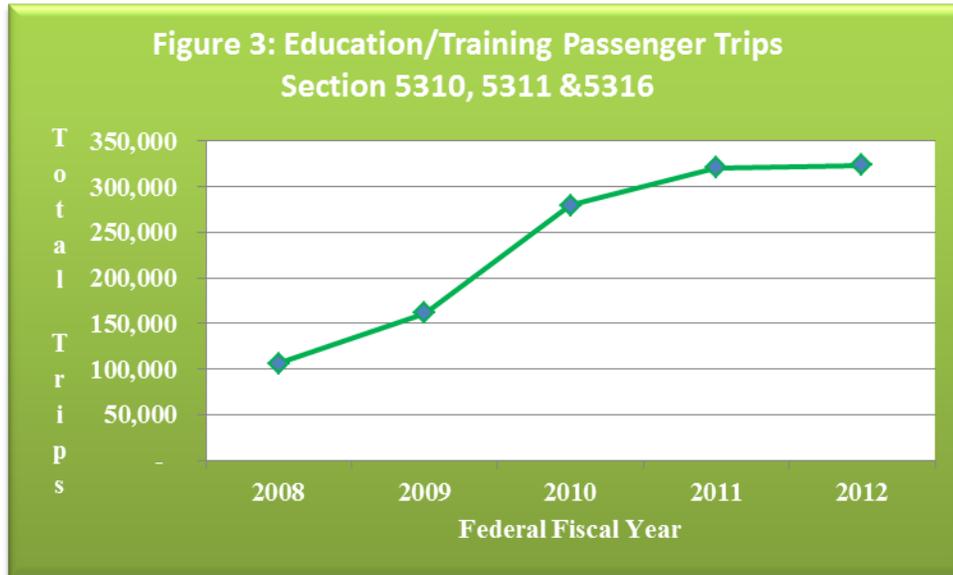


It was estimated that citizens would work about six hours per day at a wage (\$7.25/hour). The payback to sponsors of transit projects/communities, based on this highly conservative estimate, is 663% or \$6.63 for each dollar invested in this program. Communities will also benefit by allowing residents to work outside their homes. Not only does this reduce the dependence on subsidized programs, it also provides income that is spent within the state, thereby

Every \$1.00
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**Employment
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potential \$6.63
payback.

providing a direct stream of income to state and local governments through the state's seven percent sales tax and local taxes.

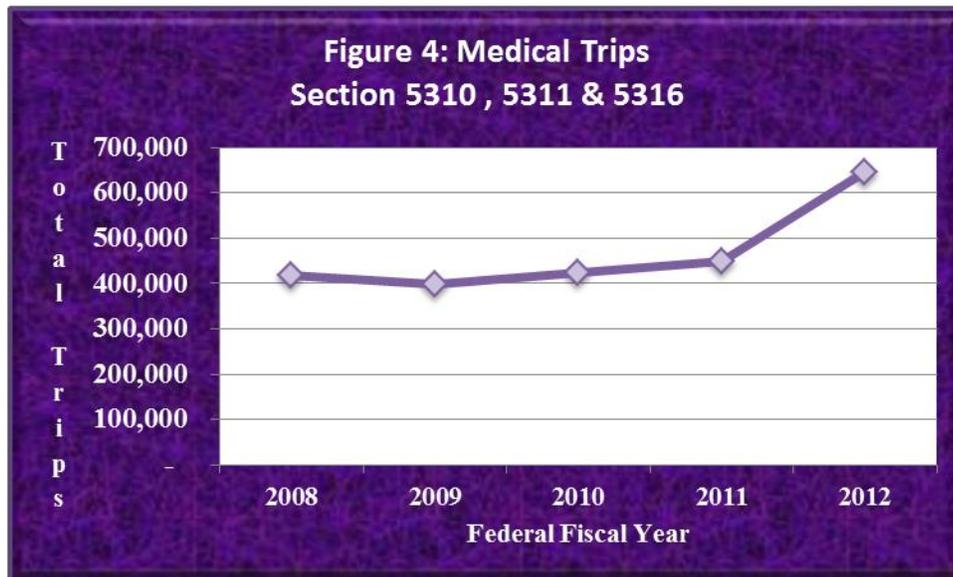
- **Education/Training** – This type of mobility funded by transit projects provides access to educational and job training programs. Education/Training Trips through the Section 5310, 5311 & 5316 programs recorded 323,727 trips in 2012 which is a 205% increase from 106,269 trips in 2008 (see Figure 3).



Education/training trips enables citizens to become eligible for employment outside of the home. If the education/training program requires 30 days (30 trips), the benefits accruing to the transit project sponsor/community were estimated on the basis that the rider would work an equal number of days (30) as the training at minimum wage (\$7.25) for six hours daily. However, this most likely underestimates the program benefits since those receiving job training are likely to work more than the same number of days as they trained. Thus, the payback to the community using this highly conservative estimate is 631%, or \$6.31 per each dollar invested in the transit program. The community also has the potential to benefit from an improvement in the mental and physical health of citizens, as well as, a reduction in unemployment benefits that are funded by the State.

Every \$1.00 invested in **Education Trips** has a potential \$6.31 payback.

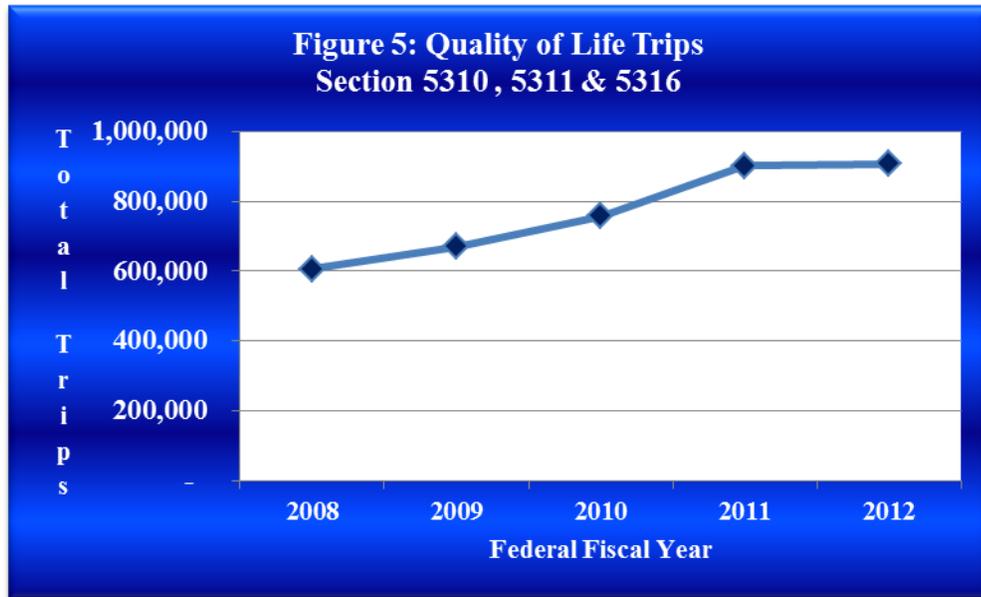
- **Medical** – The primary purpose of medical trips is to provide transportation services for the preventive medical care and treatment to citizens. Medical trips through the Section 5310, 5311 & 5316 programs increased by 54% from 418,760 trips in 2008 to 643,904 trips in 2012 (see Figure 3).



Given that nursing home costs in Mississippi average approximately **\$6,000** per month, average hospital stays are approximately **\$1300 per day**, and adult day care costs range from **\$25 to \$100 a day**, the benefit that results from providing transportation to preventive medical care is substantial based on the state's ability to avoid funding assisted living costs. Conservative assumptions were used to identify the potential return on investment, or payback to the community. Specifically, if 1% of the trips funded result in the avoidance of a hospital stay, the payback to the community is **1108%, or about \$11.08 for each dollar** which is invested in the transit program. Communities also have the potential to benefit from healthier citizens and a reduction in the need to invest in such programs as Medicare/Medicaid to fill the need for medical care. For example, there are many transportation disadvantaged clients who rely on these medical trips to receive dialysis treatments at the hospital.

Every \$1
invested in
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potential to
save the State
\$11.08

- Quality of Life** – The purpose of life-sustaining/quality of life trips is to provide transportation to social services, nutrition sites and personal shopping services including: paying bills and purchasing; clothing, medications, personal services, and other essential goods and services. Quality of life trips through the Section 5310, 5311 & 5316 programs increased by 50% from 606,238 trips in 2008 to 908,019 in 2012 (see Figure 4).



If we assume that each quality of life trip for shopping/personal purposes generates \$20 in incremental spending on taxable items, the payback to the community is 462%, or \$4.62 per each dollar invested. Communities also have the potential to benefit from a reduction in the need to fund assisted living facilities, as this service enables these citizens to live independently. The State also benefits from state sales tax collected during these purchases.

Every \$1.00 invested in **Quality of Life** trips has a potential \$4.62 payback

The statistical analogies denoted above highlight actual increased demand for transportation services in Mississippi which translates to a correlated positive economic impact potential for sponsors of transit projects and communities. The investment amounts and return potentials were once again generated using an extremely conservative estimate; therefore, the return on investment could be substantially higher, especially medical trips since they potentially represent the most cost-efficient method for diverting more expensive hospital stays. This shows that a coordinated approach to rural community transportation is an excellent investment worthy of continued study and funding.

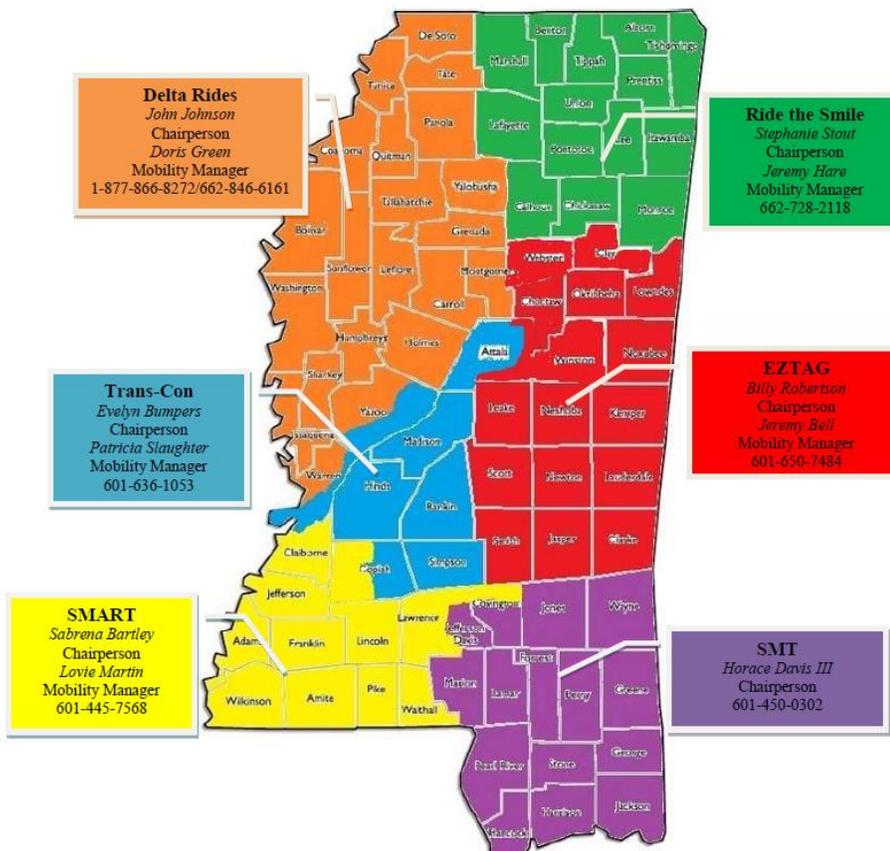
REGIONAL COORDINATION

There is no question of the economic impact which Community Transportation has had on the communities throughout Mississippi. The Statewide Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan (SCHTP) was developed in response to federal requirements, established by federal law; *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)* and guidance provided by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The FTA guidance and SAFETEA-LU require that projects selected for funding under the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310); the New Freedom (Section 5317); and the Job Access and Reverse Commute programs (Section 5316) are derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. The law was established to develop a planning process that would allow participation from public, private, and nonprofit transportation organizations, human services organizations and consumers.

Over the past several years, groups of dedicated stakeholders throughout the State have been working to develop solutions to the mobility concerns faced by local citizens. Through a truly collaborative planning process, Regional Coordination has become the keystone concept for developing innovative arrangements to meet transportation needs of local communities. The impact of a coordinated network multiplies the service provided by individual providers and broadens the support base.

Six regional transportation coordination transportation groups currently exist throughout the state of Mississippi:



REGIONAL TRENDS

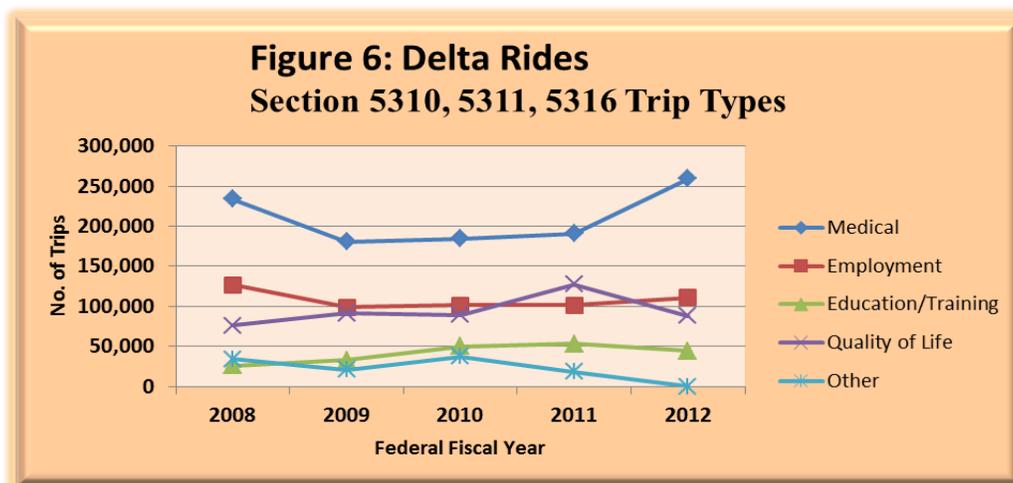
The six regional coordination groups through regional planning, resource sharing and other coordination initiatives have all recorded increases in the demand and delivery of transit services during the 2008-2012 fiscal years. The regional trends below details the demand and provision of transit services based on trip purposes. The information used is based on data collected from the Section 5311, 5310 & 5316 programs.

Delta Rides

The Delta Rides regional group comprises of transportation stakeholders throughout the delta/north western region of Mississippi. The Delta Rides regional group serves twenty one counties including: Washington, DeSoto, Humphreys, Carroll, Issaquena, Panola, Quitman, Bolivar, Coahoma, Leflore, Sunflower, Sharkey, Tunica, Tallahatchie, Holmes, Yazoo, Tate, Grenada, Montgomery, Warren and Leake Counties. Despite a volatile economic climate, coordination of services between regional partners may have attributed to an overall 3% increase in the region's transit service delivery (See Figure 6). Notable increases occurred in the provision of trips for educational and training purposes, in addition to medical care and quality of life.

Over 55% of the region's total number of trips is provided for medical type transportation purposes. Medical type transportation increased by 11% from 233,793 trips in 2008 to 259,268 in 2012. Employment trips decreased by 12% over the five year period and may be directly related to the closing and relocation of manufacturing plants and loss casino revenue in the region. Despite an overall reduction in employment trips, it is important to note that the demand for employment purpose transportation has been on an upward trend since 2010. The region's overall 71% increase in educational/training trips may be attributed to changes in the economic climate which may be correlated with increased college and training program enrollment. Trips categorized as other decreased by 99% during the period and is accredited to a more accurate trip categorization recording system.

Overall, the region added over 15,000 trips from 2008-2012 and is forecasted to continue this upward trend in the next fiscal year.



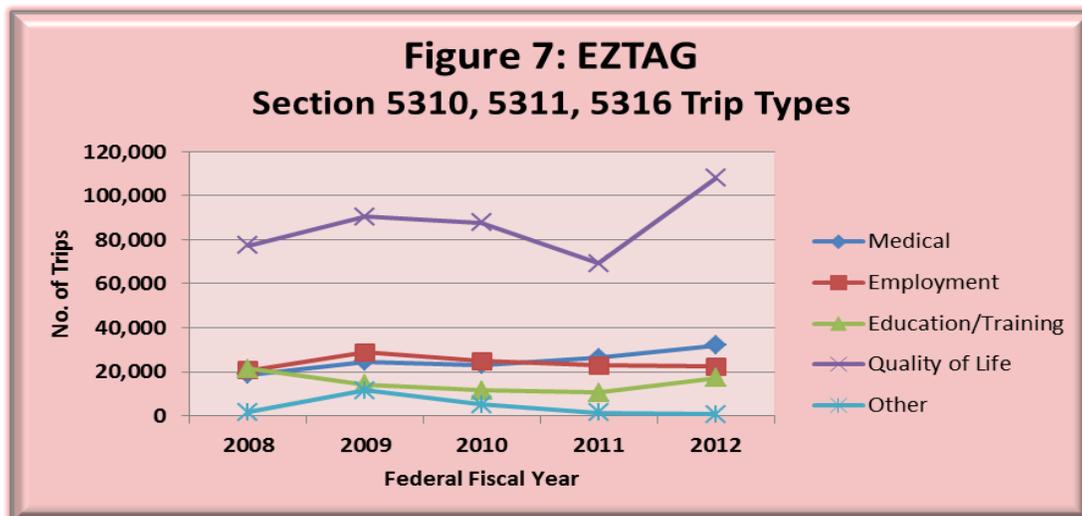
EZTAG

The East Central Transit Action Group (EZTAG) consists of transit partners from the central region of Mississippi. The EZTAG Regional Group serves fourteen counties that make up the East Central Mississippi region including: Attala, Choctaw, Clarke, Kemper, Lauderdale, Leake, Lowndes, Jasper, Newton, Neshoba, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Scott and Smith Counties. Coordination initiatives including purchase of service agreements and expanded transit services may have contributed to a 29% increase in the total number of community transit trips in the region from 2008-2012. The region provided 40,212 more trips over the five year period from 139,588 trips in 2008 to 179,800 trips in 2012 (See Figure 7).

Approximately 44% of the region's total number of trips is provided for quality of life purposes mainly for nutrition and personal/shopping. Quality of life trips increased by 40% from 2008-2012, with the region also recording a 70% increase in medical purpose trips and an 8% increase in employment trips over the five year period. Employment type transportation has been on a decline from 2010 through 2012 which may have resulted from a decline in manufacture type jobs in the region.

The prospective of increased regional employment, collaborative initiatives as well as the newly established Starkville Mississippi State University Area Rapid Transit system is expected to increase the demand for employment type transportation services in the region. An overall 20% reduction in the number of education/training trips occurred from 2008-2012. It is important to note that education/training type trips are currently on an upward trend with a 63% increase from fiscal year 2011-2012 and is forecasted to continue to increase. Trips for 'other' purposes decreased by 63% for the region during the period and is accredited to a more accurate trip categorization recording system

Overall, the region observed substantial increases in the demand for transit services and anticipated growth is forecasted to occur in the upcoming fiscal year.

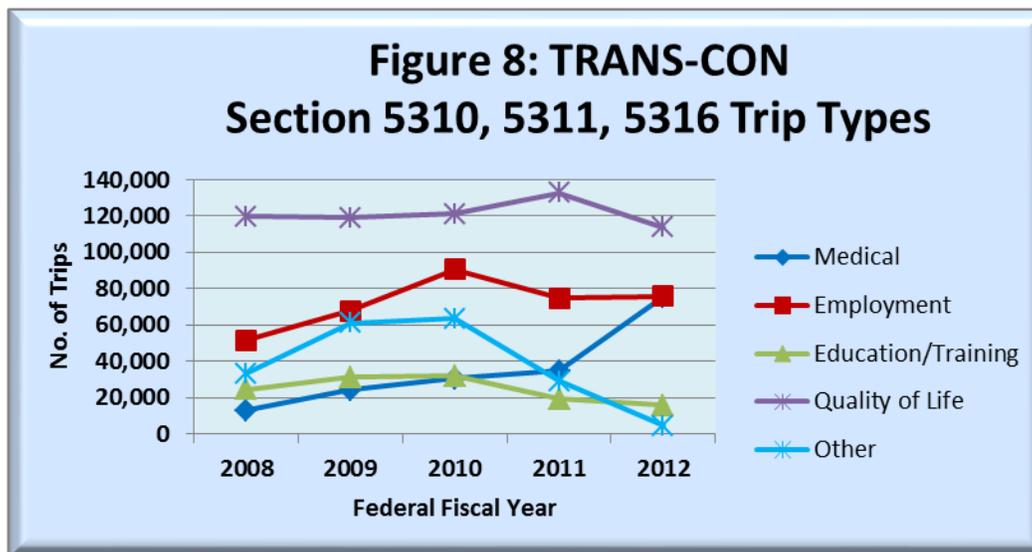


TRANS-CON

The transportation stakeholders of the Central region of the State of Mississippi have endeavored since February 2006 to develop and adopt a plan for: Copiah, Hinds, Madison, Rankin, Simpson, Warren and Yazoo Counties. The region through increased coordination efforts has increased trips by 18% over the five year period from 2008-2012 (see Figure 8). Trans-Con provided 43,210 more trips over the five year period from 241,579 trips in 2008 to 284,789 in 2012.

Approximately 42% of the region's total trips were provided for quality of life purposes primarily for shopping/personal and nutrition. Employment type transportation increased by 47% over the five year period and is attributed to better coordination of services and increased awareness of available community transit services within the region. The region increased its medical trips by 490% which may be attributed to an increased demand for medical type transportation services. Trips for educational/training purposes decreased by 36% over the five year period however, prospective coordination efforts with local colleges and universities are forecasted to have a positive impact in the upcoming fiscal years. Trips for 'other' purposes decreased by 87% for the region during the period and is accredited to a more accurate trip categorization recording system.

Overall, the region observed substantial increases in the demand for transit services and anticipated growth is forecasted to occur in the upcoming fiscal year.

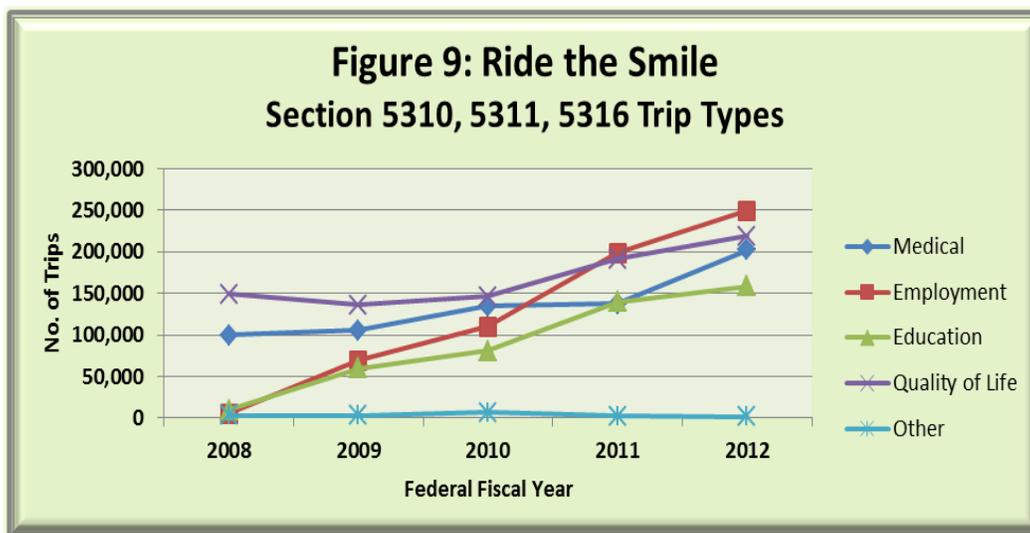


Ride the Smile

The Ride the Smile regional coordination group comprises of transit partners/stakeholders from the northeastern region of Mississippi. The Ride the Smile Regional Group serves fourteen counties that make up the North East Mississippi region and beyond, including: Alcorn, Benton, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lafayette, Lee, Marshall, Monroe, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, and Union Counties. The region recorded an extensive expansion of transportation services which may be credited to coordination initiatives with mental health agencies, veterans groups as well as newly established transit services, mainly the Oxford University Transit (OUT) System which began operations in 2009. Overall, ridership increased by 211% in the region from 2008-2012 with significant increases in every trip category besides 'other' from 267,440 trips in 2008 to 831,091 trips in 2012 (see Figure 9).

Employment trips account for almost a quarter/ 25% of all the region's trips and has increased by over 4000% from 2008-2012. This sharp increase may be attributed to an increase in manufacturing jobs in the region and may have also resulted from the transportation of regional university and college faculty and staff. Approximately 17% of the region's total trips are provided for education/training purposes and increased by 1523% from 2008-2012. Quality of life trips largely for nutrition and personal/shopping purposes increased in the region by 47% over the five year period. Ride the Smile through collaborative strategies has managed to efficiently create and operate medical type trip routes within the region and to Memphis, Tennessee for mental health and or medical care purposes. These innovative strategies may be directly related to the region's 103% increase in medical type trips over the five year period. Trips for other purposes decreased by 42% for the region during the period and is accredited to a more accurate trip categorization recording system

Overall, the region has provided 563,691 more trips since 2008 which reveals the increased demand and need for transportation services in the region. The demand for transportation services in the region is expected to continue along this upward trend in the impending fiscal years.

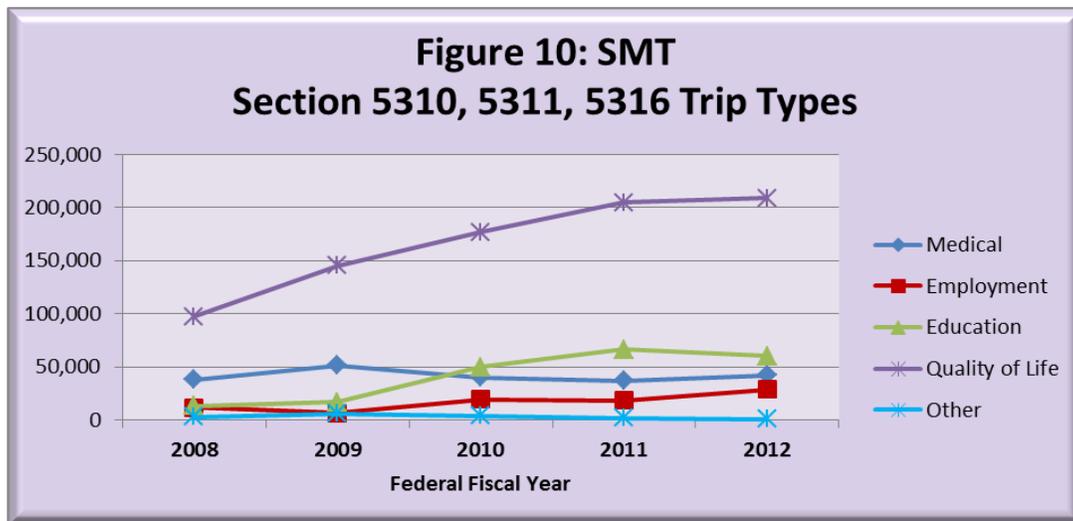


SMT

The Southern Mississippi Transit (SMT) regional coordination group comprises of transit partners/stakeholders from the southern/southeastern region of Mississippi. The SMT Regional Group serves thirteen counties including: Covington, George, Greene, Jones, Lamar, Marion, Forrest, Hancock, Harrison, Pearl River, Perry, Stone and Wayne counties. The region has two urban system partners through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Section 5307 grant program which are Hub City Transit in Hattiesburg, MS and Coast Transit Authority in Gulfport, MS which have each played a vital role in the development and expansion of transit services within the region. The overall number of community transit trips increased by 73% in the region from 885,039 trips in 2008 to 1,528,640 in 2012.

Trips provided through the Section 5310, 5311 and 5316 programs also recorded a positive increase in trips of 110% with increases in every trip category besides 'other' from 162,532 trips in 2008 to 340,938 trips in 2012 (see Figure 10). Quality of life trips account for 40% of SMT's total number of trips primarily due to the provision of trips for social services, nutrition and personal/shopping purposes. Educational/Training trips increased by 361% from 2008-2012 due to the increased demand and provision of transportation services to colleges in the region. Employment trips increased by 151% over the five year period mainly due to newly established Section 5316 Job Access Reverse Commute programs and collaborative efforts for the transportation of employees of local and regional companies. Medical trips also increased 11% over the five year period. Trips categorized as 'other' decreased by 63% during the period and is accredited to a more accurate trip categorization recording system.

The demand for transportation services is expected to continue to grow in the southern region in the upcoming fiscal years. Public-private partnerships, stakeholder involvement and other coordination efforts are expected to improve the efficiency of transit operations in the region.

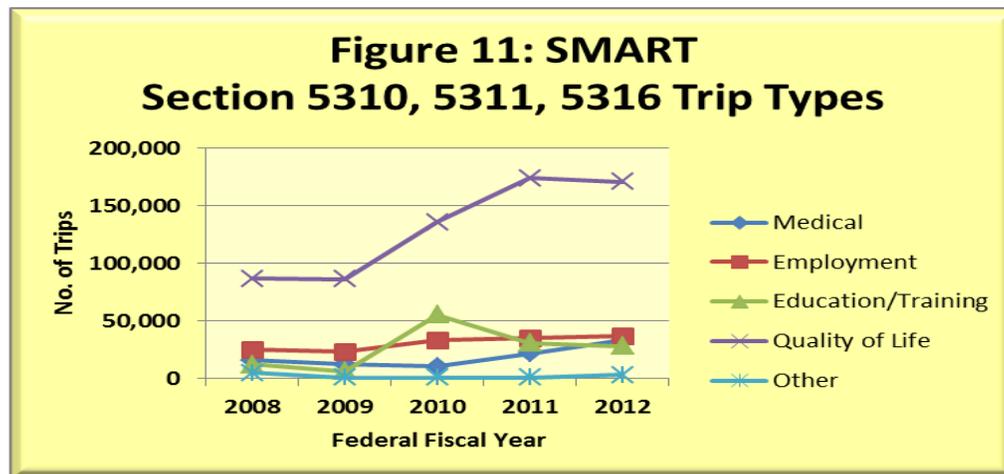


SMART

The Southwest Mississippi Accessible Regional Transportation (SMART) regional coordination group provides coordinated transit services throughout the southwestern region of Mississippi. The S.M.A.R.T Regional Group serves thirteen counties that make the Mississippi Southwest region and beyond, including: Adams, Amite, Copiah, Claiborne, Covington, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Franklin, Walthall, Wilkinson, Pike and Jefferson-Davis Counties. The region experienced an overall 89% increase in the total number of trips from 143,906 in 2008 to 271,588 in 2012 with increases in every trip category besides 'other' (see Figure 11).

Quality of life trips represent 37% of the regions total trips which are mainly for nutritional and personal/shopping purposes. The provision of trips for quality of life purposes increased by 97% from 2008-2012. Educational/Training trips in the region sharply increased by 133% during the time period which may have resulted from coordination efforts with local community colleges and universities. The demand for transportation services for medical purposes in the region also increased by 110% in addition to a notable increase in employment type trips of 47%. Trips categorized as other decreased by 34% during the period and is accredited to a more accurate trip categorization recording system.

Overall the region provided 127,682 trips more trips since 2008 and coordination efforts is expected to further increase the demand and provision of community transit services in the region.



REGIONAL COORDINATION SUCCESS STORIES

Through regional coordination efforts, many positive impacts have been noted in various communities throughout the State. Additionally, these coordinated efforts are more likely to continue to be successful as more specific coordination objectives are being identified and appropriate strategies are being employed.

Delta Rides	EZTAG	Ride the Smile	TRANS-CON	SMT	SMART
<p>The Delta Rides region celebrates the development of a regional call center which is scheduled to begin full operations in 2013. The regional call center will comprise of software which is expected to synchronize transit activities including; routing, scheduling, dispatching and calling. The call center is expected to work in collaboration with the region's already established fare schedule, website and toll free 1800 number.</p>	<p>The EZTAG regional group through the acquisition of ARRA funds is currently in the process of constructing a regional maintenance facility which will serve the needs of public transit providers. The regional group also welcomes Starkville-MSU Area Rapid Transit which will provide transportation services for the City of Starkville and Mississippi State University.</p>	<p>The City of Oxford has partnered with the MDOT and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to construct an Operations and Maintenance Facility for the Oxford University Transit (OUT) system. Construction of the facility is funded by a Section 5309 grant from the FTA, an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant, state funds from MDOT and local contributions from the City of Oxford.</p>	<p>South Central Community Action Agency (SCCAA) has coordinated with LogistiCare to provide non-emergency medical transportation services for Medicaid recipients in Simpson County and surrounding areas.</p>	<p>CTA through a private partnership launched the Coast Commuter program to assist all interested companies along the Gulf Coast and their employees with commuter transportation assistance. CTA offers 49 vanpools per day across the I-10 with an average of 480 daily commuters from Louisiana, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi to Mississippi coastal employers.</p>	<p>Natchez Transit System and the SMART region are in the process of constructing a Regional Transportation Center and Maintenance Facility. Funding for the facility was acquired through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Federal Transit Administration. The new facility will be completed by September 2013 and is anticipated to be an economic driver for the region.</p>

Regional Coordination Success Stories

Delta Rides	EZTAG	Ride the Smile	TRANS-CON	SMT	SMART
<p>Aaron E. Henry/DARTS coordinates with Bolivar County Council on Aging to provide medical transportation trips to Jackson and Memphis. DARTS has also partnered with Region 1 Mental Health facility through a purchase of service contractual agreement to provide a variety of transportation services for the agency's clientele.</p>	<p>Central Mississippi Residential Center (CMRC) has partnered with Choctaw Transit to provide a purchase of service contract. The contract agreement provides a transportation service that fosters community engagement and independent living for individuals recovering from mental health ailments in the Newton County area.</p>	<p>Northeast Mississippi Community Services (NEMCS) provides community transportation services in Itawamba County for seniors, the disabled, veterans and the general public. These trips include: medical appointments, pharmacy, nutritional trips, employment and quality of life trips.</p>	<p>Madison County Citizens Services Agency has expanded its transportation services through coordination efforts with Tougaloo College to provide education/training, employment and recreational/personal type trips. The transportation services are provided Monday through Saturday to students, staff and faculty members of Tougaloo College to areas within Madison and Hinds Counties.</p>	<p>Community Development Inc. has expanded its service area and clientele outreach through partnerships and coordinated transportation services with Pine Belt Mental Health, Brentwood Behavior, Diamond Grove and Jones County Community College to provide mental health and education/training trips</p>	<p>The SMART region welcomes Mt. Zion Economic Community Center, INC which will provide an increased availability and expansion of transportation services to Amite, Walthall and Pike Counties.</p>

Regional Coordination Success Stories

Delta Rides	EZTAG	Ride the Smile	TRANS-CON	SMT	SMART
<p>MS Valley State University Mass Transit and H.E.G.A Rural Transportation Systems coordinate transportation services for students, staff and faculty members to attend and work at institutions of higher learning within the delta region. WWISCAA also offers education/training type transportation services in the delta region to students seeking their GED and other trainings.</p>	<p>Choctaw Transit through the acquisition of funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is currently in the process of constructing a Regional Maintenance Facility for the EZTAG region which will serve the needs of transit providers within the region.</p>	<p>NEMCS has coordinated with Timber Hills Region IV Mental Health Facility to provide flexible route transportation services to Desoto County.</p>	<p>The Jackson Medical Mall Foundation provides a unique concierge service for their non-emergency medical patient clients in addition to medical transportation services facilitated through a purchase of service transportation contract with Bolivar County Council on Aging.</p>	<p>D.J. Transit through a contractual agreement with the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation services provides transportation services for employment purposes in Jones County. The agency also provides employment type transportation trips to Sanderson Farms, Kohler Engines and Politube Transformer Products LLC in Jones, Forest and Lamar counties.</p>	<p>Claiborne County Human Resource Agency through coordination efforts has expanded its transportation services and continues to provide educational/employment transportation services to faculty, staff and students of Alcorn State University.</p>

APPENDIX A

Trip Type/Purpose:

- a) **Employment** – trips to and from places of employment; these trips usually occur during peak periods
- b) **Medical** – trips to doctor’s offices, clinics, hospitals, etc. for the purpose of receiving services, excluding Medicaid-sponsored trips
 - a. **Medicaid** – trips to medical facilities paid for by the Mississippi Commission on Medicaid, which may be in the form of a contract voucher or other agreement
 - b. **Mental Health-** trips to medical facilities for the purpose of mental health patient care
- c) **Quality of Life:**
 - a. **Nutritional** – trips to congregate meal sites
 - b. **Shopping/Personal** – trips to stores, beauty salons, utility companies post office, visitation, county court house, city hall, trips to parks, movie theaters, picnics and other social functions
 - c. **Social Services-** trips to social services
- d) **Educational/Training** – trips to schools, colleges and other facilities for the purposes of receiving education and training and also include transportation for Headstart programs
- e) **Other** – trips that do not fall under one of the above categories; the trip purpose must be specified on the form

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC TRANSIT PROGRAMS
FACT SHEETS

Approximately 55 organizations are currently providing some form of transit services covering approximately 70 percent of the geographic area within Mississippi. These transit organizations assist general public, low-income, elderly citizens, citizens with disabilities, and school age children gain access to needed employment, medical, education, nutrition, social and recreational services, particularly in the rural areas of Mississippi. Transit providers range in size from those which provide daily fixed route/flexible schedule services, to senior citizen centers in rural small towns which provide demand-response services with schedules and destinations determined on a day-to- day basis.

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), Public Transit Division (PTD), administers several programs through the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) which supports public and specialized transportation service providers in Mississippi. The following are detailed description of these programs.

NONURBANIZED AREA SECTION 5311 PROGRAM

Section 5311 program, often referred as the “*Rural General Public Transportation Program*”, is our primary service delivery program to fund local projects in areas with less than **50,000** in population. Section 5311 federal grant funds must be matched at the state or local level to support services that are open to the general public.

Program funds may be used for planning, capital (e.g. vehicles and facilities), operating (e.g. fuel and drivers) and administration (e.g. salaries, fringe, office supplies) assistance to local public bodies, non- profit organizations, state agencies, Indian tribes and other operators of public transportation services, including intercity bus operators. Annually, PTD manages \$12-16 million in Section 5311 funds to support an average of 20 local projects. These projects account for approximately 1.3 million passenger trips annually.

1. **PROGRAM GOALS:** The goals of the nonurbanized program are: 1) to enhance the access of people in nonurbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation; 2) to assist in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in nonurbanized areas; 3) to encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all transportation funds used to provide passenger transportation in nonurbanized areas through the coordination of programs and services; 4) to assist in the development and support of intercity bus transportation; and 5) to allow the participation of private transportation providers in nonurbanized transportation.

SECTION 5310 ELDERLY AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Section 5310 program, often referred to as the “*Elderly Person and Persons with Disabilities Transportation Program*”, is based on the national transportation policy that elderly and disabled persons have the same right as other persons to access and utilize public transportation facilities and services. Funds are used for planning and capital assistance in both urban and rural areas. MDOT makes Section 5310 program funds available, as part of a coordinated transportation network, to non- profit and certain public entities. The specific purpose is to assist in providing services that meet the special needs of elderly and persons with disabilities for whom public transportation services are unavailable, insufficient or inappropriate. The focus is not on creating separate service.

Annually PTD manages a \$1.7 million Section 5310 program. Approximately 45 projects are authorized annually, with 20-25 new capital purchases each year.

PROGRAM GOAL: The goal of the Section 5310 program is to improve mobility for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities throughout the country. Toward this goal, FTA provides financial assistance for transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities in all areas—urbanized, small urban, and rural. The program requires coordination with other Federally-assisted programs and services in order to make the most efficient use of Federal resources.

JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE PROGRAM (5316)

Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC). Most often referred to as “the *JARC* program”, PTD uses this source of federal funds for grants that provide access to jobs in rural, suburban and urban areas. This is one of the newest services delivery grants administered by PTD.

JARC funds are available for expenses related to transporting low-income individuals to and from jobs as well as activities related to their employment and to provide commuters access to job sites in rural and suburban areas. Eligible project costs include capital, planning, and operating assistance. One of the most unique features of this program is the ability to provide subsidies in the form of vouchers for low income workers. Funding of approximately \$1 million is expected to support up to ten local projects annually.

PROGRAM GOAL: The goal of the JARC program is to improve access to transportation services to employment and employment related activities for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals and to transport residents of urbanized areas and non-urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities. Financial assistance is available for services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the transportation needs of eligible low-income individuals, and of reverse commuters regardless of income. The program requires coordination of Federally- assisted programs and services in order to make the most efficient use of Federal resources.

NEW FREEDOM PROGRAM (5317)

Section 5317 New Freedom Program formula grants aim to provide additional tools to overcome barriers facing citizens with disabilities seeking to integrate into the workforce and fully participate in society. Lack of adequate transportation is a principal barrier to employment for citizens with disabilities. This program seeks to expand transportation mobility options available to persons with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Capital (80%) and operating expenses (50%) are eligible under the New Freedom Program.

Through approximately \$800,000 in contracts, PTD will provide options to overcome existing barriers faced by persons with disabilities who are seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society. Integrating technology, training and improved operating efficiencies are our emphasis areas.

PROGRAM GOAL: The New Freedom formula grant program aims to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with disabilities seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society. Lack of adequate transportation is a primary barrier to work for individuals with disabilities. The 2000 Census showed that only 60 percent of people between the ages of 16 and 64 with disabilities are employed. The New Freedom formula grant program seeks to reduce barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options available to people with disabilities beyond the requirements of the ADA of 1990.

SECTION 5311(B) THE RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RTAP)

Section 5311(b)(3) The *Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)* is intended to be a broad and flexible program of training, technical assistance, research and other support services for transportation providers. RTAP has an average annual apportionment of approximately \$150,000. Through a series of annual RTAP awards, PTD provides an array of training and demonstration projects designed to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of local transportation services.

The overarching mission is to address the needs of rural, small urban and tribal transit operators across the state by providing scholarships, distributing training materials, provided technical assistance, distributing reports on best practices, conducting research and offered peer assistance with the goal of improving mobility

*For more program details and information please visit
www.mdot.ms.gov/www.fta.dot.gov*



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